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ABSTRACT

Presented in this booklet are brief descriptions of items and activities that are symbolic of Japanese culture. Some of the items and activities described include Japanese musical instruments and records, toys and crafts, traditional clothing and accessories, and food utensils. Several recipes for Japanese dishes are provided. Lists of pertinent books and resources are included. (EB)

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THINGS JAPANESE

by Jessie M. Shigeta

illustrated by Roger Moses

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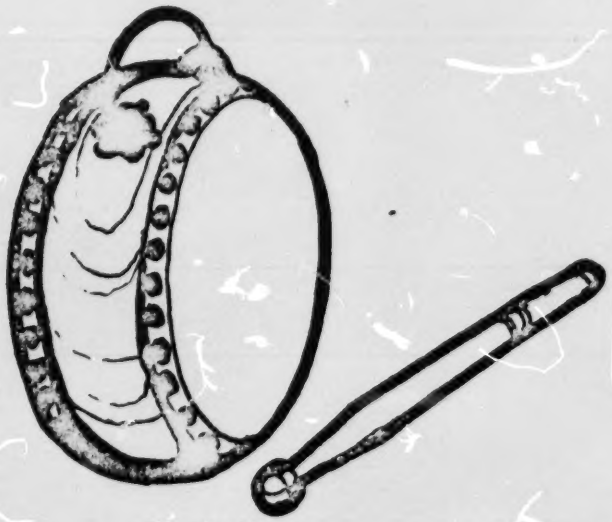
Checklist of Kit Contents

1. 1 copy, Things Japanese
2. 1 taiko (drum) and beater
3. 1 record - The Wonderful World of Japanese Children's Songs, Vol. I.
4. 1 Japanese doll
5. 1 package, origami paper
6. 1 Yukata (girl's kimono)
7. 1 Yukata (boy's kimono)
8. 1 fan
9. 1 Obon (tray)
10. 1 Owan (soup bowl with cover)
11. 1 pair hashi (chopsticks)
12. 1 copy, Seven Lucky Gods and Ken-Chan
13. 1 copy, Origami Japanese Paper-folding, Book One
14. 1 copy, Children's Songs from Japan

Taiko (drum)

The drum is usually a hollow cylinder made of wood and covered with leather on both ends. Nails with large black heads are used to hold the leather, and also to give the drum a decorative design. A handle is attached so that the drum may be held with the left hand and beaten with the other hand.

The hand drum is a replica of those huge drums used at Bon dances or at temple festivals where the drum is placed on a stand and beaten with vigor as vocalists chant.



Record: THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF JAPANESE CHILDREN'S SONGS, VOL. I

The romanized versions of the songs are written on a sheet inserted in the record jacket. Children will enjoy singing along, listening, dancing or pantomiming to the record.

To make it easier for the children to learn to sing along, the following songs are found both on the record and in the music book in the kit, Children's Songs from Japan:

	Song # on Record		Page in Book
Side 1.	1	Kutsu ga nara	60
	2	Suzume no gakko	14
	3	Nanatsu no ko	26
	4	Yuyake koyake	64
	7	Teru teru bozu	56
	9	Hina-Matsuri	70
	10	Haru ga kita	69
Side 2.	1	Hato	17
	7	Koi noburi	74

TOYS AND CRAFTS

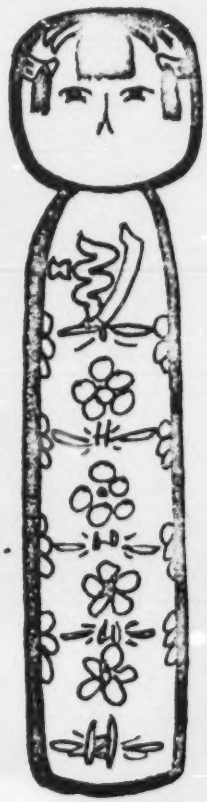
Dolls

The doll in your kit was donated by the Japanese Women's Club of Honolulu. Dolls are especially significant in the celebration of Girls' Day, also known as Hinamatsuri or Dolls Festival, which occurs on March 3.

The custom of displaying dolls on Girls' Day started about three hundred years ago and was the outgrowth of an earlier custom when people made paper dolls, transferring their bad luck and illnesses to the dolls, which they then threw into the river or

sea.

To learn more about Girls' Day you can read the following book, which may be borrowed from the public library and is not in the kit: DeFrancis, John; Things Japanese in Hawaii. The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1973.



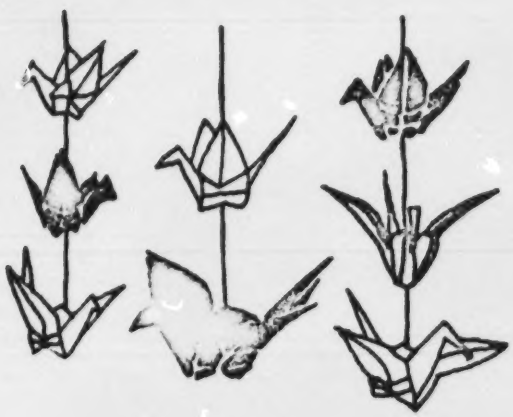
Origami

The special art of origami (ori, to fold; kami or gami, paper) is enjoyed by children and adults.

History does not definitely say where the art of paper-folding began. Since it has been claimed that a Chinese by the name of Tsai Lun invented paper nearly two thousand years ago, it seems reasonable to suppose that a form of paper craft was practiced in ancient China. Records do show that one of the earliest forms of entertainment in China was that of folding sheets of paper in various ways to make fans and sunshades.

People who have studied the history of paper-folding, however, give credit to the Japanese for originating the modern idea of paper-folding. This art was passed on from parents to children. The first book on paper-folding appeared in Japan during the early years of the 18th century.

When the Japanese people began to emigrate to various parts of the world in the late 19th century, the art of paper-folding was spread. Gershon Legman, an authority on the history of paper-folding, notes that in the 1870's and 1880's Japanese entertainers performed this"magical" art before astounded audiences in the United States.



Robert Harbin, an American authority on the subject, speaks about the basic rules that a paper-folder should follow. These are:

"1. The paper model must be achieved by folding only, without aid of scissors or glue.

"2. The shape of the model should be easily recognizable without the addition of colors or special markings.

"3. The model should be capable of folding flat after it has been displayed."

Mr. Harbin, however, feels that these rules may be broken, such as by cutting with a pair of scissors, especially since sometimes a small snip makes such a perfect form.*

The book included in the kit by Florence Sakade, Origami Japanese Paper-Folding, Book One has instructions for simple paper-folding such as dolls, fans, flowers and fish.

*Shigeta, James, Paper-Folding for 4-H Members. Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1960.

A sample of origami paper is included in the kit. Try to find similar weight paper in your school or home to use. We would prefer that you not use the paper included in the kit because it would soon be depleted and the next user of the kit would not know what type paper is best.

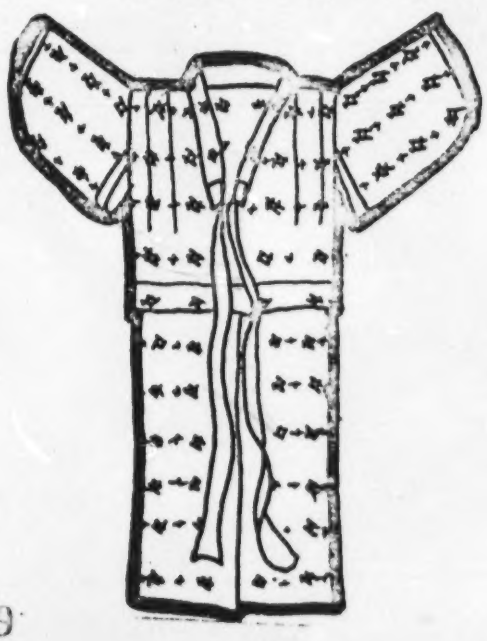
CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES

Yukata (Girl's kimono)

This girl's kimono is made of rippled cotton and is called a yukata. Because the cotton material is light-weight and cool, this yukata is worn on summer days and evenings.

In old and new Japan, children wear brighter colors than the grown adults. This yukata has pretty designs of birds, flowers and butterflies in bright red, pink and orange colors. A bright colored silk sash may be worn over the one attached to the yukata.

Yukata (Boy's kimono)



The boy's kimono is also made of rippled cotton and is called a yukata. It too is worn during the summer months because cotton is crisp and cool.

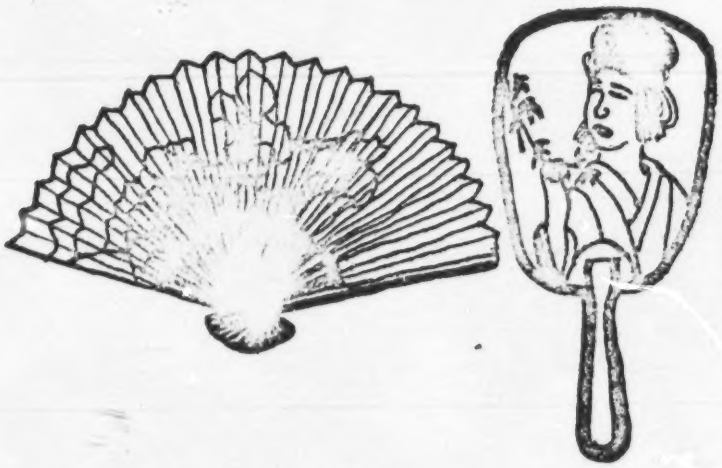
The boy's yukata has simple black geometric designs, because boys are not supposed to wear bright colors. A small black cloth sash can be worn over the

sash attached to the yukata.

The sleeves of the boy's yukata are shorter and simpler than those of the girl's yukata.

Fans

The fan in your kit was donated by the Japanese Womens' Society of Honolulu as part of a community service project. Fans were used in old Japan as accessories of clothing and to help keep cool in the warm summer months. They come in a variety of designs and several shapes.



FOOD UTENSILS

Obon (tray)

Trays in Japan are made of various kinds of wood grown in different parts of Japan. The trays are cut in round, square or oblong shapes and come in many sizes. The trays are sanded smoothly and lacquer is applied one layer over another, each time with some sanding before applying more lacquer. The most expensive ones have been lacquered over ten times.

Kamakura produces a special kind of tray called the Kamakura-Bori. It is famous for the way it is made. There are light carvings on the trays and they are lacquered beautifully. Trays made

around Kyoto are famous for the fine lacquer work. Pictures are also hand painted on them.

Meals are served on trays since the Japanese place each item in separate dishes. The meal trays are usually square, 14 x 14 inches and colored in black or red lacquer. For ceremonial occasions, the trays may have short legs.

Since wooden lacquered trays are becoming very expensive, Japan is making plastic trays with lacquer paintings. Children's trays are usually round and red with plum blossoms painted for design.

Real lacquer material should never be washed in detergent or hot water. Just rinse quickly in warm water and wipe off immediately with soft dry cloth. To bring out the sheen, one may apply some left over tea in soft cloth wrung tightly. The tannic acid in the tea will give the polish.

<u>Owan</u> (bowls)

Soup bowls in Japan are made of wooden base like the trays. After smoothing out the wood by sanding, red or black lacquer is applied several times, drying well after each application. Designs are hand painted on the covers.

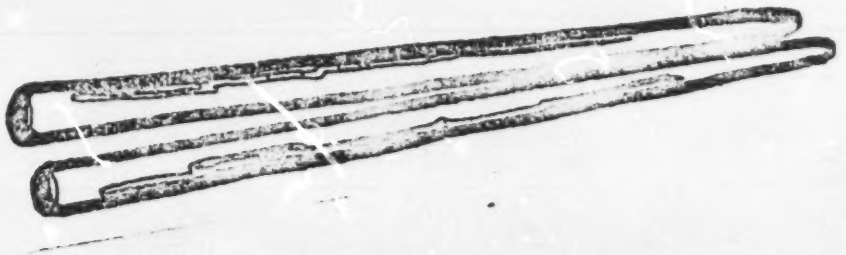
When drinking out of the Japanese soup-bowl, remove the cover and leave it outside of the tray on the right side. Since there is no handle, the soup-bowl is lifted up

to the mouth with both hands. Several sips are taken. Then the bowl is placed on the four fingers of the left hand, and the thumb of the left hand securely holds the bowl. The chopsticks are used to pick up the content in the bowl while the bowl is being held close to the mouth.

Like the lacquer trays, soup-bowls are rinsed quickly in warm water and carefully cared for as you would the trays. Too hot water and detergent will chip the lacquer.

Hashi (chopsticks)

The Japanese have used chopsticks for many centuries. They are made of split wood or bamboo which is about 8 or 9 inches in length. They may be pointed or blunt at the end.



They are made very painstakenly sometimes. Many kinds of wood are used. These are split, sanded smoothly and often lacquered. Shorter ones are made for the children. For public and picnic gatherings the WARI-BASHI (Wari,which means to split) is used. These are sanitary and disposable.

In the formal tray arrangements, the chopsticks are placed in the front end of the tray with a small ceramic piece on which to lay the ends of the chopsticks.

Holding and using chopsticks is an art. It is not complicated when one learns the art. Practicing the use of chopsticks is very important. Nevertheless, it is very challenging at first, and a lot of fun when one masters it. Just a little above the middle of the chopsticks, the upper one is held by the index and middle fingers of the right hand (right-handed person). The lower stick is held rather steady by the lower fingers. Manipulation is done by moving the index and middle fingers.

RECIPES

Musubi

Rice is the staple food of the Japanese. It is formed into musubi (riceballs) to take to picnics or for large gatherings.

Wash three cups of rice well to remove powder. Rinse and remove water. Add three cups of water. Cover saucepan. Bring to boil and lower heat to let rice steam for fifteen minutes. Turn off heat and let stand another twenty minutes, or until rice is just cool enough to be handled.

Wet hands, sprinkle left palm with a pinch of salt, and rub hands together to spread the salt over palms of both hands. Put a rice-bowl portion of rice in the left palm. Shape it into a triangular form by pressing your two middle fingers of the right hand over the rice. Wrap one-half sheet of musubi nori (seaweed) around the ball. Press rice with both hands until the nori clings to the rice. Mold the ball into triangles. Makes 12 riceballs.

Sometimes a small amount of ume (salted red plum) is put in the center of the riceball to give flavor to the bland rice.

Miso Soup

Basic Miso Soup

3 cups water
¼ cup dried shrimps or dried fish (Iriko)
3 strands green onion
½ cup white Miso
½ tofu in package cut into small squares

Soak shrimps (fish) in water for about 5 minutes. Then boil for about 20 minutes over medium heat. If desired, one may strain out the shrimps. Add miso and bring to a brisk boil. Add the

tofu and green onion. Serve immediately while hot in soup bowls. Variation: Canned clams, pieces of fishcake, sliced turnips, carrots, dasheen (Ara-imo), cabbage or green spinach may be used instead of tofu and green onions. Oftentimes, an egg is stirred into the soup for added nourishment. Today, instead of making the shrimp soup-stock, prepared base called Hondashi or Dashi-no-moto may be used. These items are found on the market.

Barbecued Chicken (Yakitori)

1 pound chicken breast
6 button mushrooms, canned
1/3 cup soy sauce
¼ cup sugar
1 clove garlic crushed
1 small piece ginger root crushed
¼ tsp. monosodium glutamate
1 tsp. Mirin (sweet rice wine)

Remove skin and bones from chicken. Cut chicken into pieces 1 inch square. Put 4 or 5 pieces of chicken which are alternated with mushrooms and passed through the bamboo or metal skewers. Soak in sauce from 15 minutes to half an hour, according to your taste. Place on broiler rack and broil for 5 minutes, 3 inches from the heat unit. Baste and broil the other side for 3 minutes. Makes about 18 skewers. Charcoal fire is preferred.
Variation: A pound of sirloin beef could be used instead of chicken. For older children, green pepper and boiled carrots could be used for color and added vegetables.

Kanten (Agar-Agar)*

2 sticks white kanten
5 cups water
1 cup sugar
½ tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. lemon extract
pinch of salt (1/16 tsp)

Wash kanten and squeeze off water. Tear into small pieces. Soak kanten and vanilla extract in the 5 cups of water for about

*Agar-Agar is obtained from a seaweed known as the Ceylon Moss (red algae). The gelatinous substance is obtained mostly as translucent strips.

30 minutes. Cook until kanten melts and is dissolved. Then add sugar and the pinch of salt and cook for another 10 minutes, stirring often. Add lemon extract and remove from fire. Cool in flat cake pan, about 8 x 10 inches, until kanten hardens. Cut into small size to serve as dessert.

Variation: One may use red kanten sticks. Add 2 or 3 drops of cinnamon extract instead of lemon extract.

Mango Kanten

2 sticks white kanten	1 cup mango pulp mashed
2 cups water	1 package (3 oz) lemon gelatin
1 cup sugar	2 tablespoon lemon juice

Start as the basic recipe above. Add 2 cups of water and soak for 30 minutes. Add sugar and the lemon gelatin. Bring to boil. Cook until kanten dissolves in about 2 minutes. Stir in the mango pulp and lemon juice. Pour into the 8-inch square pan. Cool and refrigerate until firm. Makes 48 pieces.

BOOKS

Miller, Elizabeth K., 1969. Seven Lucky Gods and Ken-Chan. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo, Japan. 40 pp.
Japanese folk tales are told to children not only for entertainment but to teach them moral values. This story tells who the Seven Lucky Gods are, what they look like, and how they rewarded Ken-Chan, a little Japanese boy, for his honesty.

Sakade, Florence, 1972. Origami Japanese Paper-folding, Book One. Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo Japan. 32 pp.
Instructions for creating from paper simple items such as dolls, fans, sailboat, Santa Claus, tree, flowers, cup, etc.

White, Florence and Kazuo Akiyama. 1960. Children's Songs from Japan. Edward B. Marks Music Corporation, New York, N. Y. 92 pp.
Collection of Japanese children's songs includes music, Romanized Japanese versions and English translations.

Where We Bought Everything

Eleven of these kits have been placed at throughout the islands of Hawaii. If you would like to have a kit of your own, feel free to xerox this book. Below, you can find out where we bought all the items included in the kit.

Microphone Music
2077 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph: 946-1488

The Wonderful World of Japanese Children's Songs, Vol. I.

Omachaya
165 N. King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Obon (tray with plum blossoms)

Shirokiya
2250 Ala Moana Center
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph: 941-9111

Girl's and boy's kimono
Owan (soup bowl) with cover
Chopsticks

Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.
Melville, New York 11746

Children's Songs from Japan

Harry's Music Store
3457 Waialae Avenue
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816
Ph: 737-7711

Taiko(Japanese drum) and sticks

World Wide Distributors
1132 Auahi Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph: 536-1734

Origami Japanese paper for folding
Origami Japanese Paper-folding, Book I.
Seven Lucky Gods and Ken-Chan

Japanese Women's Society of Honolulu
P.O. Box 3233
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801

Japanese doll
Japanese fan
These items were donated as a community service project.
We express our sincere appreciation.

Japan Airlines Ph: 533-6241
165 S. King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The cover of this book was donated by Japan Airlines.